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Nadine Gordimer

Charles Dickens

R.K. Narayan

Morris Dickstein

Jayanta Mahapatra

Tijan M. Sallah

Jonah Raskin

Amitav Ghosh

Lucy Maud Montgomery

Githa Hariharan

Beatrice Culleton

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Kathryn Harrison

Malala Yousafzai

Hinduism

African American

Arab-American

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Chief Editor

Nibir K. Ghosh,
68 New Idgah Colony,
Agra-282001, U.P. (INDIA).
Telephone : +91 562 2230242
Cell.: +91 98970 62958
e-mail : ghoshnk@hotmail.com

Editor

Prof. A. Karunaker,
Plot No. 51, Road No. 6
Samathapuri Colony
New Nagole
Hyderabad-500035
(Andhra Pradesh)
Cell.: +91 9849302145

e-mail : akredrem@gmail.com

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EDITORIAL

In the introductory chapter of *The Clash of Civilizations* Samuel Huntington rightly pointed out that “culture and cultural identities, which at the broadest level are civilizational identities, are shaping the pattern of cohesion, disintegration and conflict in the post-Cold War world.” It is quite apparent from events like the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992, the 1993 Bombay blasts, the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001, the 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008 and most recently the *Charlie Hebdo* episode that our so-called global civilization is imminently poised for an inevitable clash of cultures/religions. In the ensuing discourse resulting out of such calamitous conflicts, expressions like “freedom” and “fear” often come to the fore. Freedom of speech and expression is doubtlessly our inalienable right. Perhaps, as an expression of this prerogative, *Charlie Hebdo* published cartoons caricaturing Prophet Mohammad, an act considered blasphemous by Muslims worldwide. As a retaliatory act, the terrorists, the self-proclaimed defenders of faith, entered the *Charlie Hebdo* office and killed twelve journalists on the staff of the satirical magazine. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called the attack “a horrendous, unjustifiable and cold-blooded crime...a direct assault on a cornerstone of democracy, on the media and on freedom of expression.” In an unprecedented show of solidarity against the gruesome act of terrorism, over a million people, including heads of several nations, marched in Paris two days after the terror act. Defending the freedom of the press, the lawyer of the satirical journal, Richard Malka stated: “*Charlie Hebdo* is not violent but irreverent, it aims at provoking laughter and laughter can be corrosive but never hateful and never violent....You have the right to engage in blasphemy, you have a right to criticize my religion quite simply because none of this is serious.”

In a similar light can be seen the controversy that erupted when M.F. Husain portrayed Hindu goddesses in the nude in some of his paintings, a depiction that he said symbolised purity. It was quite obvious for Hindu hardliners to take offence and demand his exile from the land. Unfortunately, it is natural for fundamentalist forces to ignore the voice of reason and resort to violence to silence dissent of any kind. Such forces tend to ignore the fact that what truly signifies free expression is the willingness to listen, to hear the views of others, as well as the ability to express them. A.G. Gardiner had so wisely said in his essay, “On the Rule of the Road,”: “Liberty is not a personal affair

only but a social contract. It is an accommodation of interest.” If one could take in such sensible advice, the earth would be a lovely planet to inhabit.

However, perspectives of conflict change when the defaulters as individuals or collective forces are people from the same community as the aggrieved. Both Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* and Taslima Nasreen’s *Lajja* have incurred the wrath of the Muslim community leading to fatwas, exiles and the banning of their books. In her preface to *Lajja* Taslima records in anguish:

“I detest fundamentalism and communalism. This was the reason I wrote *Lajja* after the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on 6 December 1992. The book...deals with the persecution of Hindus, a religious minority in Bangladesh, by the Muslims who are in the majority. It is disgraceful that the Hindus in my country were hunted by the Muslims after the destruction of Babri Masjid. All of us who love Bangladesh should feel ashamed that such a terrible thing could happen in our beautiful country...*Lajja* is a document of our collective defeat.” Frankly speaking, when I read the book in 1993 and I read it again now, one thing that remains constant in this 20-plus years is my firm belief that before demolishing Babri Masjid the fundamentalist elements may have taken a dip in the river of sanity to foresee how brazenly it would effect their own community living outside India’s precincts in Islamic states. Of course, it would have been a great deal wiser if such forces could comprehend the futility of such an absurd act at the first instance.

Finally, reference must be made to one of the worst acts of violence in Pakistan’s history that saw 131 children gunned down by terrorists in the Army Public School, Peshawar on the ominous morning of 16 December, 2015. The calamity left the entire human world utterly shocked, dumbfounded and outraged. The only solace, if any, may come from the song penned by ISPR officials in the aftermath of the tragedy. The opening lines of the song are: “*Main aisi qoum se hoon jiske woh bachon se darta hai/ Bada dushman bana phirta hai jo bachon se larta hai*” (I am from a nation whose children frighten him/ Some enemy he is, he who targets children). The song, containing the message from a slain child to the extremists, is a glowing tribute to the little martyrs. The lyrics are bound to make us all feel choked, totally at loss for words.

Nibir K. Ghosh
Chief Editor

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GOODBYE TO COLUMBIA: THE EDUCATION OF MORRIS DICKSTEIN

Jonah Raskin

Morris Dickstein's new memoir, *Why Not Say What Happened: A Sentimental Education*, reaches a crescendo in 1971 when the English Department at Columbia votes to deny him tenure and he takes a job at Queens College. Even for long-time academics, his narrative provides a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of Ivy League academia. For readers of twentieth-century Jewish fiction, Dickstein emerges as a character who might inhabit a Philip Roth novel entitled "Goodbye, Columbia." Comic and yet deadly serious, he's a representative figure of his generation and an inveterate New Yorker who moved from the Old Testament to rock 'n' roll and from the synagogue to the streets of protest, all the while that he confesses his own inner demons. Yes, this is a confessional memoir of the sort that might make his button-down professors uncomfortable.

Nearly a decade before his Columbia declined to make him a permanent member of the faculty, Dickstein graduated from the college magna cum laude. In 1963 he received an M.A. from Yale and in 1967 he received a Ph.D., also from Yale, where he worked with Harold Bloom and wrote a thesis entitled *The Divided Self: A Study of Keats's Poetic Development*, which became his first book. It's a story he tells with great gusto and with a sense of his own divided self.

Dickstein seemed destined to join the English Department at Columbia and to become a colleague of the teachers—Lionel Trilling, Steven Marcus and Andrew Chiappe—who had guided him through his undergraduate education. Dickstein and his alma mater seemed and indeed still seem indivisible. Retired now from Queens after a long and as they say illustrious teaching career, his education at Columbia still matters to him. About a third of the way through his memoir he explains, "It's strange that I should be writing about my undergraduate courses and teachers more than half a century later." Not so strange to those who attended Columbia.

- **Jonah Raskin**, a frequent contributor to Re-Markings, is the author of 14 books.

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NADINE GORDIMER: A HOMAGE

S. Ramaswamy

Nadine Gordimer (20th November 1923-13th July 2014) was a South African writer, political activist and recipient of the 1991 Nobel Prize in literature. She was recognized as a woman “who through her magnificent epic writing has,” in the words of Alfred Nobel, been of very great benefit to humanity.” The sheer volume of her work is astonishing. She has fifteen novels to her credit and twenty one short fiction collections. Though she is a very successful political novelist that shows her “activist” side, she felt that the short story was the literary form of the age. She published her short stories in the *New Yorker* and other prominent literary journals. The arrest of her best friend and the Sharpeville massacre saw Gordimer’s entry into the anti-apartheid movement. She became active in South African politics and was a close friend of Nelson Mandela’s defence attorneys. She also helped Mandela edit his famous speech “I am prepared to die.” When Mandela was released from prison in 1990 Gordimer was one of the first people he wanted to see. Many of Gordimer’s books were banned, indeed, quite a few. *The Late Bourgeois World* was her first personal experience with censorship. It was banned in 1976 for a decade by the South African government. *A World of Strangers* was banned for twelve years. *Burger’s Daughter* published in 1979 was banned one month later. *July’s People* was also under apartheid. In South Africa, she joined the African National Congress when it was still listed as an illegal organization by the South African Government. While on lecture tours she spoke on matters of foreign policy and discrimination beyond South Africa.

She won many Honours and Awards. The chief among them are: W.H. Smith Commonwealth Literary Award (1961), the Booker Prize (1974), Modern Language Association Award (1982), the French Legion of Honour (2007), Fellow Royal Society of Literature, and to crown it all, the Nobel Prize for literature(1991).

- **Professor S. Ramaswamy** is the recipient of three Fulbright Fellowships and a winner of Phi Beta Kappa award. He was awarded the British Council Scholarship twice and has been a Shastri Indo-Canadian Fellow at McGill University. In 1959, he helped found the Bangalore Little Theatre (BLT).

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

EMPOWERED FEMALE IDENTITY IN LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY'S *EMILY* TRILOGY

Ujjwala Tathe

Right from the beginning of the second wave of feminism not only women's literature but children's literature as well has been one of the focuses of feminist studies. The feminist influence on children's literature has led to the rereading of children's books in general and to the interrogation of girls' position in particular in the larger scholarship of children's literature. Considering its intriguing nature, Lissa Paul, a children's literature critic, finds a good reason to appropriate feminist theory to children's literature since both – women's and children's literature – are devalued and regarded as marginal or peripheral by the literary communities. Prof. Ruth O. Saxton too, acknowledging the impact of the movement, states that the movement is instrumental in bringing forth the "new woman" accompanied by her young counterpart "new girl" and her own texts "girls' fiction" that questions female roles and challenges conventional gendered hegemony.

The newly emerged "new girl" in contemporary girls' fiction is empowered to design her own female identity. It no more emphasizes stringent moral values like earlier texts, but reflects sensitivity to the problems associated with gender-role stereotyping. The girls' fiction has liberated the female protagonists from the inevitably growing into passivity. Now she instead plays a variety of roles, takes an active part in shaping her destiny and does not surrender her personal power. If she does not know how to stand for herself, she learns so in the course of her life. If she is unaware of her own strength, she learns to empower herself. Unlike heroines of earlier novels written particularly for girls, she does not lose her self-possession. Instead, in the process of maintaining her strength, she often subverts traditional gender roles, sometimes wonderfully incorporating characteristics that are typically associated with both the genders. The girl is what she wants to become and in this process she resists the generic pattern, as she realizes the values of womanhood. No wonder, Kathleen Ordean rightly proposes: "Girls don't need any moral lessons in being nice; they need lessons in making decisions for themselves" (qtd. in O'Keefe 203).

- **Dr. Ujjwala Tathe** is Associate Professor in the Department of English at Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad (Maharashtra).

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

MALALA YOUSAFZAI: A CHILD WARRIOR

Tasneem Shahnaaz

When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful. – From a speech at Harvard in September 2013.

These are the words and thoughts of a mere 17 year old girl, Malala Yousafzai who received the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize sharing it with the 60 year old Indian children's rights activist Kailash Satyarthi. She is a child whose one voice reverberates globally with her message of education for the girl child. Her life has been dramatic: she has returned from the dead, so to speak, to fight against the tyrannical Taliban theocratic dictatorship.

Imagine a young girl who defies the Taliban ban on girls going to school; who at age eleven strongly advocates the right of the girl child to receive an education; who at twelve years writes against the Taliban and in favor of girls' education; who was shot in the head by the Taliban for resisting them; who had a part of her skull removed because of the bullet wound and yet survived; who was sixteen when she addressed the United Nations in 2013; who has already published an autobiography *I Am Malala – The Girl who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban* (2013). This is the striking story of the life of a young, courageous and bold girl Malala Yousafzai, the youngest recipient of the Nobel Prize till now.

Born on July 12, 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan, Malala was like any other girl who dreamed of going to New York one day and would go to the market to buy school books and DVDs of American TV programs like *Ugly Betty* and *Twilight*. She loved the *Ugly Betty* program wherein the protagonist had ugly braces and possessed a lovable, magnanimous heart. Her father's anti-Taliban work and her own brush with fear and death transformed this young girl into an advocate for girls' education at an early age, which resulted in the Taliban issuing a death threat against her. Such passion in a young child who fiercely believed in the right to education for all girl children is a rare occurrence.

- **Dr. Tasneem Shahnaaz** is Associate Professor of English at University of Delhi.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

MAKING US HUMAN: GITHA HARIHARAN'S *THE GHOSTS OF VASU MASTER*

Mini Nanda

Gandhi's abiding belief was in the ancient school system that had character-building as its primary function (*HS 77*). Vasu Master's father was an Ayurvedic healer who pursued the Gandhian holistic approach of education and thus along with "reams of shlokas" that Vasu imbibed, he also learnt English from a pair of "mismatched but equally challenging teachers," his father and William Shakespeare (20). The impressionable Vasu learnt early from his father that "if you want to cure the wounds of our motherland and treat her festering sores, start with your body" (*VM 21*). This precious sentiment of connecting the material body with that of the motherland creates a symbiotic bonding which echoes Gandhi's argument in the chapter on "Passive Resistance," that what is true of families and communities also holds that there is one law for families and another for nations (*HS 68*).

Githa Hariharan's *The Ghosts of Vasu Master* (1994) begins with a bewildered allopathic doctor advising Vasu to seek alternative lines of treatment for his several undetected ailments. The medical reports have drawn a blank. Vasu, a retired teacher with forty years of teaching pre-teen boys, meets his new challenge in Mani the eight-year old. No one knows what is wrong with Mani till he becomes more silent. The three R's eluded Mani and he is disenfranchised from school and society. Gandhi had summed up the ordinary meaning of education as "knowledge of letters" (*HS 76*) which was beyond the boy's grasp. Hariharan points out in the epigraph by Charaka in the novel that "The entire world is teacher to the intelligent and foe to the unintelligent." How could Mani fit into the category of "intelligent," with his vacant eyes and dribbling mouth? His papaya shaped head which seemed to grow longer was his only means of protection against humiliation in school. He would butt his taunting classmates with his head in his very short stint in school.

- **Dr. Mini Nanda** is Head, Department of English at University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

CULTURAL OSTRACIZATION IN BEATRICE CULLETON'S *IN SEARCH OF APRIL RAINTREE*

C.G. Shyamala

A writer's world view is sharply determined by his or her historical and cultural roots and experience. Talking of the inseparable link between the study of literature and history, Edward Said says, "...the study of literature is not abstract but is set irrecusably and unarguably within a culture whose historical situation influences...a great deal of what we say and do" (xxi). To him, by concentrating on empty humanism while interpreting literature we are eliminating "...any mention of trans-national experiences such as war, slavery, imperialism, poverty and ignorance that has disfigured human history" (xxi). Natives in Canada, Australia and New Zealand – Canadian Indians, Inuit Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders and Maoris share a common history, of violence, of rape, of exploitation, of dispossession and death. "Here Are Our Voices – Who Will Hear?" is the telling title of a preface by Métis scholar and poet Emma LaRocque to an anthology of literature by Native women of Western Canada, entitled *Writing the Circle*. The autobiography *Halfbreed* by Métis author Maria Campbell, published in 1973, is usually quoted as the seminal text drawing attention to Aboriginal writing in Canada, in general. Although there have been earlier Aboriginal writers, like Emily Pauline Johnson from the Mohawk nation, contemporary Native authors frequently call Maria Campbell "the mother of us all."

This paper traces how the Métis race and its culture in Beatrice Culleton Mosionier's autobiographical novel *In Search of April Raintree* have been evicted and the deprivations have led to drastic consequences. Through the experiences of the Raintree siblings April and Cheryl, the author delineates the cultural and social apathy of the imperious groups in the civilized world to native and indigenous cultures. The richness of Beatrice Culleton's writing comes from her own experiences as a Métis growing up in St. Boniface, Manitoba during the same period as Cheryl and April. The youngest of four children, Beatrice Culleton grew up in foster homes in and around Winnipeg. She was a ward of the Children's Aid Society from the age of three.

- **Dr. C.G. Shyamala** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Mercy College, Palakkad, Kerala.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**“RISING IN TRIUMPH, LIKE THE PHOENIX”:
AFRICAN AMERICAN AND
DALIT WOMEN POETRY**

Melissa Helen

One of the distinct differences between Dalit and Black literature is that though, historically speaking, the Brahmanical hegemony was first challenged by Buddhism as early as the sixth century B.C., Dalit revolt and social movement came into being in the 1950s after Dr. Ambedkar revived it as an “emancipatory religion for the oppressed” (Singh 167) whereas the Harlem Renaissance led to the flowering of African American Literature in 1920s. Consequently, the corpus of literature by the African American community is vast and the tradition is older in comparison to Dalit literature. Further, most of Dalit literature is written in regional languages; therefore, the readers in English may be familiar with only a few works that have been translated into English.

In his essay on “Liberation Movements in Comparative Perspective: Dalit Indians and Black Americans,” K.P. Singh says “both the Indian Dalits and American blacks have organized assertive efforts for their respective societies. Their protest ideology involves resistance, opposition, confrontation and conflict with the dominant groups (oppressors). Dalits and blacks alike have adapted these to achieve their desired goals of social equality, social dignity and de-stigmatized social identity” (166). He traces the struggle for liberation in these two groups and finds numerous comparisons and contrasts in their ideologies, leaders and phases of their movement.

In the light of what is stated above, important questions such as the notions of resistance, revolt and confrontation need to be examined. I would like to explore the poetry written by women from these two groups. According to Barbara Harlow, the term resistance (muqamah) was originally applied to Palestinian Literature by Ghassan Kanafini (Harlow 20).

- **Dr. Melissa Helen** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Nizam College (Osmania University), Hyderabad.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

THE VOICE OF FREEDOM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MARY PRINCE AND HARRIET JACOBS

Lipsa Mishra

This essay analyzes the literature produced by two slaves, one a West Indian slave, and the other an African American bonded servant in antebellum America. It chiefly deals with how and to what degree they were exploited as women and as mothers. This essay also accounts for the tense relationship between the realities of their experiences as slaves and their skill to communicate these realities in the sentimental form. By including literary expression of anger in their work, the authors, Harriet Jacobs and Mary Prince, try to bring together the sentimental fiction and the realities of their lived experiences as slaves into a dialogue. These bonded slaves found it very difficult to express their womanhood and their journey as daughters, wives, and mothers through the sentimental fiction of 19th century America. This inability to express the realities of their bitter experiences forced them to revise the sentimental plot and dramatize it a little. These authors have used anger to explore their limits as women and as mothers. They tell the stories of their families by recreating the limitations of the sentimental genre and by generating a suitable space for anger to be used to discuss the loss and torture they have undergone.

The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave (1831) gives an account of a West Indian slave who, after being forced to move from place to place in and around the Caribbean, tells her story in England to the Antislavery Society. Her story begins in Bermuda, where she is bought by Captain Darrel for his granddaughter Betsey Williams. On her Mistress Mrs. Williams' death, she is sold to the cruel Captain I. She is separated from her mother and sisters, she is sexually exploited, is made to tolerate brutal physical labor and punishment. Yet, she somehow manages to acquire a small amount of money by buying and selling goods in the public square. Her experience that arises out of European colonial expansion in the Caribbean is unique not because of an isolated series of events but for her guts by means of which she manages to weaken the charges made for and against her "authenticity" as a woman.

- **Lipsa Mishra** teaches English at IHSE Science College, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

EXISTENTIALISM IN THE POETRY OF JAYANTA MAHAPATRA

Subrat Kumar Samal

“Existentialism” to Bruno Bettelheim is the “most extreme agony” that engenders in one the feeling that “one has been utterly forsaken” (Bettelheim 267). As a human tendency, its root can be traced back to the ancient Christian philosophy. The idea of the original sin leading to the damnation of mankind is the very foundation of this thought. Throughout the *Bible*, especially in the Old Testament, we find different individuals, including the very prophets, quivering in their faith and feeling abandoned by God. This in later ages developed as the Christian School of Existentialism. This concept however changed after the dawn of Renaissance as rationalism and inquisitiveness became more popular. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, scientific progress achieved great heights. Science, thus, virtually usurped the place of God. It became the new religion and savior of mankind. But the Satanic aspect of science was explicitly revealed during the Second World War. The various ingenious weapons of mass-murder such as chemical gas, land mines and atom bombs shattered the faith that one had upon the redeeming capacity of science. Having abandoned faith in God and losing it in the case of science, humanity was now left nowhere. All hopes for a happy and perfect life upon earth faced the same fate as that of the Christian ideas about afterlife. This gave birth to the modern or the Atheistic School of Existentialism. The chief exponents of the Christian School of Existentialism were Kierkegaard and Heidegger. The Atheistic School of Existentialism was promoted by Jean Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel and Albert Camus.

The Existential trend found a new thrust in the postcolonial phase. The term “Postcolonial” has been used by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin to “cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (Ashcroft et al 2). With the expansion of the colonial powers of the West, most of the Eastern countries came under British rule. In most of the cases, the colonial rule was far from even that of an enlightened despot, much less than that of a redeemer, as was claimed by the rulers.

- **Subrat Kumar Samal** is Assistant Professor in English at Rourkela College, Rourkela, Odisha.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**WOMAN AND SOCIAL CLASS IN
RUPA BAJWA'S *THE SARI SHOP*:
A POST-FEMINIST READING**

Ashoo Toor

Feminism has dominated the literary world across the globe for several decades but in its overenthusiastic aim to recover the voice of the subaltern woman it has become treason against man. Of course, it has been an understandable, necessary and important phase in recognising the long-silenced and oppressed woman. Yet, going by its selective denunciation of the male being the sole reason for the genesis of all of a woman's predicament is probably a circumscribing of vision that ignores the universal metaphysical and existential hues of human existence. In fact, the global intellectual climate has moved from colonialism to postcolonialism, modernity to post-modernity and the contemporary women writers have begun to exhibit post-feminist concerns, thereby transcending gender politics, genre boundaries and narrative discourses.

Feminism, resting by and large on binaries, has never been a homogenous discourse. As such, the post-feminist ideology is more suited to the contemporary situation; being much more flexible and heterosexist in orientation, it widens its ambit to include men as well, who, sadly, have not been the recipient of enough positive feminist academic attention. The need to re-define feminism is basically a fall-out of this gaping lacuna in the existing paradigms as well as it is a response to the changing literary and social scenario that compels a corresponding change in perceptions.

Re-configuring the gender equation is what Rupa Bajwa explores in *The Sari Shop*. The pivotal character of her debut novel is no debonair or a diva but a plain sari shop assistant Ramchand. Bajwa shows the underbelly of urban middle class India as well as portrays lives of the lower stratum of Indian society. Brutal consequences of crossing the Rubicon, obsession of Indians with the English language and how it has become a yardstick to judge a person's knowledge and place in society is satirized brilliantly.

Dr. Ashoo Toor is Assistant Professor (English) in the Department of Agricultural Journalism, Languages and Culture at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

HINDUISM: COMPLEXITY AND COMPREHENSIVENESS

Ruth P. Johny

Hinduism is the oldest of the world's major religions and it is the world's third most popular religion with around 900 million followers (Wadhwa 39). The history of the Hindus, as we know it today, goes back 5000 years, but Hindus believe that their religion is without beginning or end and is a continuous process even preceding the existence of our earth and the many other worlds beyond. Hinduism is complex, comprehensive and concrete. The term Hinduism first refers to a place, then a people and then to the religion. The word Hindu is of geographic origin and was derived from the name originally given to the people settled on the River Sindhu. It was corrupted by foreign visitors to the word "Hindu" and the faith of the Hindus was given the name "Hinduism" in the English language. Hinduism has no founder or a single creed. Like other religions, Hinduism also has the four elements – cult, code, creed and community. Hinduism may well be considered as a 'sea' into which many rivers and streams flow in.

S. Radhakrishnan has called Hinduism as a "museum of beliefs" and Nehru has called it a "parliament of religions" (3). Some of the major characteristics of Hinduism are its comprehensiveness, universality, non-historical character, tolerance, emphasis on intuition and the doctrine of *Sanatana Dharma*. Hinduism has been able to survive both the internal stagnation and external threats of aggressive converting religions like Islam and Christianity in its long history.

David Brown mentions three major differences between Hinduism and other great religions of the world (63). They are: 1) Hinduism has no founder; 2) Hinduism has no common creed; and 3) Hinduism is not institutionalized. Hinduism is essentially a school of metaphysics for its aim is not merely to make humans perfect beings on earth or a happy denizen of heaven but to make him/her one with the Ultimate Reality, the Eternal, Universal Spirit (Sharma 9). The greatness of Hinduism is at once its complexity and its simplicity. Hinduism is neither a unitary concept nor a monolithic structure; it is rather the total way of life (Scott 75).

- **Ruth P. Johny** has recently submitted her doctoral thesis at Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

CHARLES DICKENS: HIS PLACE IN THE “GREAT TRADITION”

Sandip Sarang

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is the giant of the early years of the Victorian novel. He is ‘the’ English novelist, as Shakespeare is ‘the’ English dramatist. An attempt here is made to give some general impressions of the world he created and the way his art matured.

Dickens has remained an outstanding English novelist. Of all his contemporaries, he alone had the power to create a fictional world of his own, to give life to his most absurd characters, and to convey essential truths through his broadest exaggerations. Moreover, what he yielded in order to satiate popular taste was of less consequence than the right that he withheld – the right to be true to himself, to do justice to the integrity of his own feelings. The Dickens who entertained and pleased remained always a critic of that he most detested. Whatever the titillation and delight his humour provided, his satire struck at the institutions, practices, and hypocrisies he hated. When his own bitterness and despair increased, he dimmed the lightness of his comedy and cast dark, sombre shadows over his fictional world. The very disturbances that struck his own soul, the psychological problems that beset him, became material for his craft, so that Wilson in *The Wound and the Bow* could demonstrate the creative power that came out of personal anguish, and Edgar Johnson could subtitle his biography: *Charles Dickens, “His Tragedy and Triumph.”*

His literary achievements extended from the *Pickwick Papers* (1836-37) to *Bleak House* (1852-53), and included, among others, such popular titles as *Oliver Twist*, *Dombey and Son* and *David Copperfield*. His romance with the public had been virtually love at first sight. Even before most of his readers were aware of his name, they had been enraptured with *Sketches by Boz*, a series that appeared in *The Monthly Magazine* and was later illustrated by Cruikshank, the famous cartoonist.

- **Dr. Sandip Sarang** is Associate Professor in English at Post-Graduate Government College for Girls, Chandigarh.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

ARAB-AMERICAN LITERATURE: SHIFTING CONTEXTS

Rama Hirawat

Only once have I been made mute. It was when a man asked me, "Who are you?" – *Kahlil Gibran, Sand and Foam (Gibran 2)*.

The contemporary world is divided by boundaries that are becoming progressively porous and engendering an expanding community of diaspora. America has emerged as a haven for people of different nationalities in search of success and security. Arab presence in America can be traced to the latter part of nineteenth century. In an increasingly multicultural and hybrid American society, the status of Arab diaspora is problematised, giving rise to questions related to identity and loyalty. What does it mean to be an Arab in America? Who are Arab-Americans? How do they configure the different aspects of home and hyphen, in a world of diametrically opposed and frequently clashing Arab and American cultures? What are the intricate dimensions of their losses, as a diasporic community, in a constantly shifting state of political affairs between the Arab states and the U.S.? What are the survival strategies adopted by them in order to comprehend and construct the identity as a mosaic?

In the milieu of negative delineations of Arabs as terrorists and oppressive, and due to the rigid patriarchy practiced within the community, the Arab-American woman finds herself doubly marginalized. What are her struggles against the dual stereotype of race and gender as she tries to locate herself within the American society? How does she resist both the Arab and the American constructs of self while conceptualizing her own blueprint of identity? This paper is an effort to explore how writers deal with these key questions in their works and at the same time negotiate the hyphen of their existence as Arab-Americans.

For a multi-axial understanding of the aforementioned queries, it is vital to recognize the turbulent affiliation between America and Arab states.

- **Dr. Rama Hirawat** is Lecturer in English at S.S. Jain Subodh P.G. College, Jaipur.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

GANDHI IN R.K. NARAYAN'S WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA

Sudarsan Sahoo

R.K. Narayan, an icon of Indian Writing in English, presents Mahatma Gandhi's influence in his prominent novel *Waiting for the Mahatma*. Mahatma Gandhi appears as an influential character in the novel. Gandhi had fought not only for India's freedom but also for social justice which remains a dream for Indians even today. There is an unequal distribution of wealth among Indians. Gandhi wanted equal distribution of wealth among the rich and the poor, yet the poor and the neglected continue to lead a life of scarcity and misery. He had wished to launch another nonviolent social struggle for achieving equality among the rich and the poor. It did not come through because of his assassination soon after independence.

In the novel, Gandhi comes to Malgudi to address the people during the struggle for freedom. He asked them to develop a sense of unity. He clapped his hands rhythmically and said: "I want you all to keep this up, this beating for a while – no good not enough....I like to see more vigour in your arms, more rhythm and more spirit. It must be like drum beats of the nonviolent soldiers marching on to cut the chains that bind Mother India. I want to hear the great beat. I want to see unity in it" (19). This resurgent voice awakened the Indians to be free from the oppression and exploitation of the foreigners.

At the very outset Mahatma Gandhi explained that he would speak in Hindi as a matter of principle. He said, "I will not address you in English. It is the language of our rulers. It has enslaved us. I very much wish to speak to you in your own sweet language, Tamil"(16). The Mahatma had profound love and affection for the language spoken by the people of India. He treats English language as the language of the ruling class.

The Mahatma asked the people to discipline themselves. The prime objective of life is to be disciplined in various activities. He felt Indians must try to discipline themselves to attain the noble objectives of life. Discipline is the greatest virtue of mankind.

- **Dr. Sudarsan Sahoo** is Lecturer in English at Parala Maharaja Engineering College, Berhampur (Odisha).

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**CONFESSION AS AUTOBIOGRAPHY: KATHRYN
HARRISON'S *THE KISS – A SECRET LIFE***

Sanjay Solanki

*Who can forgive him for having confessed Mme de Warens
while confessing himself? – George Sand (Sand 48).*

*All biographies like all autobiographies like all narratives tell
one story in place of another. – Helen Cixous (Cixous 174).*

There are theorists who wouldn't even acknowledge autobiography as a genre; and within the genre itself, except for a few conventional norms, the language takes hold of them all quite firmly and, of late, the likes of Paul De Man and Roland Barthes have revealed its "contra-generic intentions that are its very source" (Sturrock 23). But on the other hand, the genre proved to be resilient and significant, especially more so in the postmodern avatar, when the self is extensively orchestrated as never before; "[it] constructs multiple spaces where the private and the personal collapse into projections of a public self where the individual is represented within the context of mutuality and commonality" (Paquet 4-5).

Autobiography and biography are closely related genres: while one is delimited only by self-consciousness, the other by one's knowledge of its subject. They are, by their very nature, proverbial finger pointers, but in a reverse manner. It is said that one who points a finger at somebody actually points back the rest at himself; while autobiographers point a finger at themselves, they perforce point the rest at others. Therefore, by implication, while they autobiographize themselves, they biographize many others, intentionally or unintentionally. Autobiographies and biographies are narrative constructs, and as such, their tellability and readability depend more or less on those devices that they share with fiction. Although it may be argued that in their general design they are largely linear narratives of a person's lives and may not employ one or more stylistic devices of fiction (for instance, the device of creating suspense). Yet, it cannot be possible to argue away each and every such device.

- **Dr. Sanjay Solanki** is Assistant Professor in English at Government College, Kalapipal (Madhya Pradesh).

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**UNDERSTANDING HISTORY:
AMITAV GHOSH'S *SEA OF POPPIES***

Faroze Ahmad Chopan

Study of history and heritage of the country helps society in planning strategy for contemporary and futuristic needs. Those unaware of their past, progress and culture of civilization face many obstacles. History deals with real life, just like yours and mine. It deals with people's decisions and their way of life.

It is essential to turn the scars of the past into the smile of present day. This is possible only through a thorough understanding of the past. The freedom that we are experiencing today is an outcome of the sufferings and the struggle of our forefathers and the mental and physical agony that they have undergone during the colonial era. It is important to bag the spirit of the bygone age and turn it into living deeds on the part of the writer. Leo Tolstoy observes: "As long as histories are written of individuals like Caesars, Alexanders, Luthers, Voltaires and so forth who have taken part in given events, and not histories of all persons without exceptions who have participated in them, no descriptions of the movements of humanity will be possible without the conception of some such force as compels men to their activities to a common end" (Tolstoy 434).

Influenced by the political, traditional, cultural and social milieu of post-independent India, Amitav Ghosh in his writing provides insight into the relations between small human stories and big historical changes. In the novel, *Sea of Poppies* (2008), Ghosh has projected India's heritage, tradition, past and moral values. By focusing on the issue of Indentured labour of the past, Amitav Ghosh wants the modern society to take cognizance of the struggle, blood and sweat of our forefathers into evolving and making the present society worth living.

Ghosh represents the characters as poppy seeds which grow in large numbers from the field to form a sea where every single seed is ambiguous about its future. *Sea of Poppies* illuminates the suffering, hardships and difficulties faced by Indian people in the past, after the Slavery Abolition Act came into effect on August 1, 1835.

- **Faroze Ahmad Chopan** teaches English at SGSITS Indore and is also pursuing his Ph.D. in English at Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

REVIEW ESSAY

“IDIOMS OF HOPE”: TIJAN M. SALLAH’S *HARROW* POEMS

Nibir K. Ghosh

Harrow: London Poems of Convalescence by Tijan M. Sallah, the celebrity Gambian poet and icon of contemporary African writings, is a unique departure from the usual socio-political and cultural concerns that he addresses in his earlier works. The poetic terrain in this slender volume, comprising eighteen poems and a “Foreword,” is neither Africa nor America (where Sallah currently lives and works) but a hospital in Harrow, London where, nursing his wounds, he sets out to explore the veritable landscape of the soul crowded with myriad impressions that range from the immediate to the timeless, from the explicitly particular to the inherently universal. The volume is dedicated to Chinua Achebe and Nadine Gordimer, whom Sallah refers to as “two dear friends; two great African heroes.” Sallah mentions in his “Foreword” to the collection how the poems were the outcome of a near-fatal accident, “the child of a harrowing experience in London,” that he had on the night of October 12, 2000: “The poems in this volume were inspired by that tragic episode...They were written in Harrow while convalescing from the accident. Every day, I wrote one poem and read it when the Ward family came. It became a liberating ritual, a catharsis” (10).

On that fateful October night, narrates Sallah in his “Foreword,” when he walked out of Sheraton Heathrow Hotel to get “a quick dinner” he was caught in unawares when a speeding “saloon car” hit him with tremendous force resulting in extensive fractures on his left femur along with bruises and lacerations. He was rushed to the Middlesex University Hospital in Hounslow, London where he underwent surgery and was then transferred for recovery to The Clementine Churchill Hospital in Harrow (8-9).

The prosaic rendering of the episode that one finds in his “Foreword” is described in great detail in one of the longish poem titled “I Must Not Look Down” where he reflects on his near-brush with death: “For a moment, I thought, as I flew in the air,/ That death has suddenly beckoned me to final rest./ But, thank Great Kindness, I was half-spared./ I now have to reflect and anticipate the best” (25). As he lay in the surgical ward “like a wounded animal,/ Awaiting surgery in painful

delirium” he hoped to be rescued from the “pandemonium” of anxiety, pain and anguish by the benevolent “Great Kindness” (27). Even a cursory glance at this poem reveals Sallah’s intrinsic ability to transform graphic prosaic details into exquisite lyrics suffused with rhyme and music.

As a survivor, Sallah finds it comforting to reflect and meditate on the significance of eternal spiritual values that we often tend to lose sight of in our perpetual race for materialistic pursuits, “the world is too much with us” syndrome that William Wordsworth had popularized in his own time. In the poem “Near-Death Experience” Sallah records: “Near-death experience can be religious/ It turned my eyes to the obvious/.../ That mindless seeking of silver and fortune/ Can lead to a spiritual misfortune/ “It seems moderating the passions is the key,/.../ When we are soaked in world-lust, engulfed in the tempting sea/ We should pray daily and be mindful./ If nothing, to our own soul-yearnings be careful” (35).

This mindfulness for spiritual and human values gives Sallah various perspectives to view the trauma of the accident. On the one hand he observes, “Unable to stand on my feet,/ I swallowed the throes of defeat./ .../ Dependency is the child of paralysis;/ I have come to this after much analysis” (“Unable to Stand,”44), while on the other he is quite reluctant to “sue” the driver of the car that hit him. He is quite forthright in stating in “Some Friends Say”: “Some friends say I should sue the driver,/ But I do not want to create a paradise for lawyers./ I do not want to be in their garrulous game./ I do not want to trundle to the courts for fame” (29). Rather than think of penalizing the driver in any way, he allows his humaneness to come to the fore by appreciating the driver’s gesture of heeding to his own conscience and stopping “to cover me with his jacket” (“I Must Not Look Down” 25) instead of running away from the scene of the accident.

The collection takes one through numerous instances that highlight how the human body and mind in torment and agony can draw strength and sustenance from small mercies and endearing human gestures. In “Here I Lie Now” Sallah is quick to appreciate how the love of the friends who come to visit him in the hospital with “warmth in their faces” takes away his mind from the “Dickensian hell I have been in” (13). Even when the Nurse attending on him jokingly says that his funny gait suggests that he must have “stayed at the pub long last night,” he doesn’t feel embittered or sour: “All I know is the nurse

jokes with a certain passion;/ I can only think of it as compassion” (“The Nurse Says” 19).

In the poem “Tribute to the Body-Carpenter” he is visibly aware that his “mortal furniture is broken” and that “My body is no better than a broken furniture/ Wobbly it is, and its music squeaks./ Looking like some animated painful picture,/ I move slowly making sure nothing breaks” (16). Yet he feels impelled to acknowledge his debt to the attending surgeon whom he refers to as the “carpenter of scars,/ Who joins muscles and bones with herbs and bark” (17). He reiterates the esteem he shows for the “Body Carpenter” (the doctor) in another poem entitled “Next to God, the Doctor” where he says: “When in pain, next to God, is the doctor.../ The doctor’s words ring true like God’s trombones.../ And the prescriptions must be held with the sacredness of treasure” (20). While dwelling on the healing touch that a doctor imparts through his skills, the poet is reminded of Epicurus, the Greek philosopher, who saw pain and pleasure as “Two sovereign principles” that “Nature bestowed on humanity” (20).

In his famous essay, “The Convalescent,” Charles Lamb had remarked in good humor about the predicament of the convalescent: “...what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie a-bed, and draw daylight curtains about him; and, shutting out the sun, to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it?” Unlike Lamb, Sallah in *Harrow Poems* shows his marked preference for allowing his roving mind and sensitive soul to move from wallowing in self-pity in the depressing confines of a hospital ward to encompass “all the works that are going on under” the Sun. In “The Nights Can Be Long” Sallah writes: “I feel tonight like a throbbing newborn,/ But with a history; so without the garment of innocence./ I am conscious of the past, but helplessly forlorn;/ Waiting for time to unfold to morning in patience” (14).

While poems like “Mad Cow” and “The African Penguins” show the poet’s awareness of contemporary events, poems such as “The Maid that Brings” and “A Lesson of History” reveal the poet’s desire to see the present in relation to the past, especially in the context of the English Empire. Harrow, which figures in the title of the present collection, is also the location of “Harrow School,/ Where children of the British elite/ Get groomed for the high seat” (38). In the present time many Asian children are also on the school’s role in keeping with the idea of “The new rainbow-Britain drawn from the global sphere” (“The Maid that Brings” 38). In an ironical tone Sallah remarks: “Britain

is really a great place,/ Open to all the world's cultures and races,/ Wedded by this English, this maxim-tongue,/ That flows like water, and to all belongs" (38). The content of the poem helps one recall postcolonial discourses that can be found in texts like *The Empire Writes Back*.

The tenor and tone of "A Lesson of History" is no less pungent. Here the poet juxtaposes "England invaded by the magic/ Of aboriginal histories, a rich panache of lore, craft and lyric" with the hard fact that "Empires also smell of aboriginal/ skeletons" (42). Lying on the hospital bed, the poet muses: "I lie down here in this land of Empire./ After it has retreated, reflected, retired./ I am reminded of Hindustan and Bantustans./ Of English incursions into indigenous lands" (43). The poem ends on an ominous note imbued with a prophetic warning: "I am reminded of suppressed histories, buried tongues./.../ England will become the world it vanquished./ Convergence is the future of the invader and the anguished" (43).

Another poem in the collection that needs to be mentioned specifically is "God Save Us." Here Sallah describes how he awoke one night terrified by a raging storm "That roared all night like a hungry lion, scaring us from sleep" (22). He saw the storm as Nature's revenge on man for mindlessly playing with the environment for material gains, violating thereby what Rousseau called the "Social Contract." Aware of the implication of "global warming" he pleads with God thus: "God, save humanity from mindless terror on nature,/ Else, we are doomed to suffer its revenge and torture" (23). It is significant that a convalescent struggling to come to terms with his own pain and agony does not withhold himself from thinking of pressing environmental issues that threaten mankind.

Taken together, these beautiful lyrics can veritably be seen as the dispersed meditations of a sensitive soul in search of panaceas to assuage individual suffering as well as collective misery. If these "idioms of hope" could be for Tijan M. Sallah "a liberating ritual, a catharsis," there is reason enough to believe that readers will find in this superb collection the urge and the inspiration to create what W.H. Auden outlined in the concluding stanza of his poem, "In Memory of W.B. Yeats":

*In the deserts of the heart
Let the healing fountain start,
In the prison of his days
Teach the free man how to praise.*

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Harrow: London Poems of Convalescence by Tijan M. Sallah. Leicester: Global hands Publishing, 2014. 56 pp. \$14.99.

- **Nibir K. Ghosh** is Head, Department of English Studies & Research, Agra College, Agra. He was Senior Fulbright Fellow at the University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A. during 2003-04.



CARRYING ON WITH DREAMS

Shadan Jafri

Education is neither Eastern nor Western, it is human. - Malala Yousafzai (136)

Malala Yousafzai's fearless and riveting memoir, co-written with Christina Lamb, is an engrossing account of her life and a larger description of her father's life and his struggles. The writer keeps the reader's attention intact and alive till the very end. The beautiful portrayal of the Swat Valley of Pakistan where Malala grew, the careful but precise description of the natives, the complicated history of the region are all presented with pristine clarity. The book should be read not only for its vivid drama but also for the urgent message it wants to give to the world and in turn draws the attention of the greater powers for help to restore back peace in the country and help them get rid of the Talibanis. The atrocities of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, the unjust killings and bloodshed of thousands of innocents described by Malala in her autobiography send shivers in the minds of the reader.

This story is about a young woman named Malala who decided to fight for women's right to education when this fundamental right was taken away by the Taliban. Malala was born in 1997. Both her mother and father came from a very remote part of Pakistan called Shangla. They moved to a small town called Mingora in a district called Swat Valley just a hundred miles from Afghanistan. Malala's birth was not a cause for celebration mostly because she was not a boy and also because the family was extremely poor and had no money for a big feast. Her father Ziauddin Yousafzai named her Malala after a courageous woman who led the troops in a battle against the British in 1880. In fact the name means "grief-stricken" (10). She was named after Malalai of Maiwand, "the greatest heroine of Afghanistan" (9) who "inspired the

Afghan army to defeat the British in 1880 in one of the biggest battles of the Second Anglo-Afghan War” (10). Her mother Tor Pekai meaning “raven tresses”(15) was illiterate but her father was a great speaker involved in many environmental, social and political causes around the region. He was a teacher and he decided to open schools along with his friends and business partners. He opened up schools for both boys and girls at a time when most women were illiterate and had no inclination to pursue education. The oldest of three children and her parents’ only daughter, Malala loved learning and understood the value of education.

Ziauddin was convinced that beside the pen and the sword, there is an even greater power: that of women. He never discriminated between his daughter and his two sons. As a Pashtun, he came from a tribe that had migrated from Kabul and settled on the lush but war-weary frontier that separates Pakistan from Afghanistan. As a Yousafzai he inherited a rich legacy that could be traced to the Timurid court of the sixteenth century (18). He came from an economically weak family but had very high and noble ambitions. Ziauddin Yousafzai was struggling to establish his school which he aspired to call “Khushal Public School.” He was facing a sea of troubles like tackling a deeply corrupt government official to whom he refused to pay bribes (40), a Mufti who lived across the way and objected to the education of girls, a practice he denounced as haram, or offensive to Islam. Malala writes in Chapter 7 of her book, “Ziauddin is running a haram school in your building and bringing shame on the mohalla [neighbourhood]. These girls should be in purdah” (74).

By the time Malala was ten years old, she was the topper of her father’s school and by the time she was eleven, she had established herself as an international advocate for girls’ education in Pakistan. But, the burgeoning power of the Talibanis was creating even greater problems for both Ziauddin and his daughter. Malala was now being targeted by the Talibanis for “spreading secularism” (188). The fundamental Talibanis had penetrated the valley all the way to the capital of Islamabad and were spreading terror by beheading Pakistani police and holding their severed heads on the roadside (104). “Moniba and I had been reading the Twilight books,” Malala recounts, and “it seemed to us that the Taliban arrived in the night just like vampires. They appeared in groups, armed with knives and Kalashnikovs....These were strange-looking men with long straggly hair and beards and camouflage vests over their salwar kamiz, which they wore with the trousers well above the ankle” (91).

But for all the terror around them, Malala and her family were hardly cowed into submission. Ziauddin continued to rail at his country's Talibanization in government offices, to the army, to anyone who would listen, gaining a name throughout Swat for his rectitude and courage. Malala learned to go to school with her books hidden under her shawl, she continued to study and excel, eventually giving public speeches on the importance of education that her father would help write. She writes, "I read my books like *Anna Karenina* and the novels of Jane Austen and trusted in my father's words: 'Malala is free as a bird'" (55). Malala started giving interviews to promote education and create awareness of women's rights. She was just a child but she spoke from the heart. People listened to her speeches and she received many awards. She wrote a blog for the BBC website in which she described life under the Taliban rule. She wrote under the pen name Gul Makai, which means 'cornflower' and is the name of the heroine in a Pashtun folk story (130). It's quite clear where Malala's independent spirit comes from. Her involvement in politics and activism in the face of the Taliban's looming presence came from her father's advice and encouragement. As she writes, "My father used to say, 'I will protect your freedom, Malala. Carry on with your dreams'" (55). Malala has very courageously mentioned Maulana Fazlullah in Chapters 10 and 11 of her book, the man who accepted the responsibility of the brutal massacre of the students of Army School, Peshawar on December 16, 2014. She writes in Chapter 11: "There is a saying in the *Quran*, the falsehood has to go and the truth will prevail. If one man, Fazlullah, can destroy everything, why can't one girl change it? I wondered. I prayed to God every night to give me strength" (117).

Malala talks at length of Benazir Bhutto and how she became a role-model for her and all the young girls in Pakistan. She writes, "It was because of Benazir that girls like me could think of speaking out and becoming politicians. She was our role model. She symbolized the end of dictatorship and the beginning of democracy as well as sending a message of hope and strength to the rest of the world" (107). But Benazir's assassination on December 27, 2007 shattered her hopes. Benazir was killed by a suicide bomber in Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi. Malala wondered, "If Benazir can die, nobody is safe. It felt as if my country was running out of hope" (111). One of the worst things that began during that period, writes Malala, was when people started to doubt one another, "Fingers were even pointed at my father. Our people are being killed, but this Ziauddin is so outspoken and he's still

alive! He must be a secret agent!” (125). Actually Ziauddin had been threatened by Mullah Fazlullah or Mullah FM as he was popularly known because of the daily broadcasts he would give on the radio. Ziauddin was in fact scared for his family’s life as well as his own. But, he thought Talibanis don’t attack children. “Malala is a child,” they would say, “and even the Taliban don’t kill children” (136). But her grandmother would pray, “Please God make Malala like Benazir Bhutto but do not give her Benazir’s short life” (136).

On October 9, 2012, Malala was coming home from school when their school bus was stopped and a young man entered the bus and asked, “Who is Malala?” (6). She recounts in the Prologue, “The Day my World Changed, “No one said anything, but several of the girls looked at me. I was the only girl with my face not covered. That’s when he lifted up a black pistol. I later learned it was a Colt 45....” (6). The Talibanis attempted to assassinate her; one bullet passed through her forehead and barely missed her brain. Malala was eventually flown out of Pakistan to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, England, for successful reconstructive surgery. She still lives there.

The assassination plot turned out to be a tactical error. It made Malala’s campaign global. The Pakistani government condemned the Taliban for this attack and searched for her attackers. “There is good news coming from the U.K.,” the head of military operations in Swat had told Malala’s desperate parents as they awaited word of their child’s condition, “We are very happy our daughter has survived” (235), “Our” indicating how she had become the daughter of the nation. Malala has since won many awards, spoken in front of the United Nations, and won the Nobel Peace Prize.

The book offers a glimpse into the life of a Pakistani teenager and her family and the problems they face in a country caught in the clutches of hardcore fundamentalists. Malala’s story amply demonstrates, in her own inspiring words, how “One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world” (262).

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- **Dr. Shadan Jafri** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English Studies & Research at Agra College, Agra.



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At night it seems a hole in the earth,
until you walk down; the black wall veers
to eye level and higher; the names multiply.
The hole becomes a precarious ledge
on a darkened corner of the world.
At the vertex, the shock descends,
like the percussion of monstrous hands:
the enormity, if not horror, of war dead.

I'm surprised to find a humane memorial
in spite of all that's been said.
Each name has a voice we can touch,
trace with fingers, pronounce in the solemn
field of the mind; courage, death, stupidity,
are not reduced to three anonymous soldiers
no one ever mentioned in a prayer.

Who are these people at 11 p.m.?
I lose count at thirty, when I'm pushed
by a skinny youth, drunk, high perhaps,
stumbling up to the wall: "You taught me to smoke,"
he says, forehead pressing the black granite,
"I'm trying to quit. You'd want me to by now."

I kneel, touch a poppy wired to a wreath,
strike a match to read a letter, typed, unsigned,
taped to the stem of the flower:
"I can't forgive you for going but I
Won't forget I was your wife who let you."

Lottery number three hundred and twelve
the year they took the first fifty-two,
I never had to choose, to go, or anything else:
this wall of names reproaches understanding.

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Even the family brown bear
Joined the princess in endless sleep
In the embrambled castle keep.
The prince found her pale, cold, but fair,
And released her, her retinue,
From endless dreams to nothing new.
A wedding and two babes conceived
Enraged the prince's ogress queen,
Who ordered them served up in sauce,
Though she was easily deceived,
With hind and lamb in a tureen,
By the cook, who hated his boss.
She died in a barrel of snakes.

Each day the sleeping beauty wakes.
We've all been asleep for 100 years,
So, when we wake, vigorously alive,
As the creeping armies of night arrive,
We will wash them out to sea with our fears.
The cannibals will have themselves to eat.
The king and queen will summon a piper
To drive away the thorn and the viper,
But hear only their own hearts cease to beat.
What we will make of our new universe
Depends (like the fine point of a spindle)
On how tiny, sharp our hearts will dwindle.
Will we invite a new, more evil curse?
Sleep on, nothing will happen while we do.
The prince's kiss has changed into a moue.

- **Christopher Guerin** is Vice President, Sweetwater Sound, Inc., Fort Wayne, Indiana, U.S.A. He holds two degrees in English Literature from Northern Illinois University.



THE LEAVES FALL FROM THE TREE IN A BEAUTIFUL WAY

Rahil Shaban

The leaves fall from the tree in a beautiful way.
See the richest hues of May,
The crisp apples and corns lay
On a goldenly sunny day.

The little and confused dragonfly,
Seen in the month of July,
Has lost it way!
The leaves fall from the tree in a beautiful way.

There in September is a little groundhog,
Which is eating an apple and a few nuts,
Also teasing a dog!
There ready is the hazy fog.

Look at the penguin, in December,
Eating a fish without a dish and wishing for more fresh fish!
There is a baby walrus,
Of food is making a fuss.

See the months of spring,
Jumping in its rich colours like a spring,
The roses, rosemary, golden wattles, daisies, dandelions,
Hues as sharp as lions.
The leaves fall from the tree in a beautiful way.

- ***Rahil Shaban** is a student of Class VI at Podar International School, Mumbai.*



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their
comedians
seriously
and the
politicians
as a
joke.

- *Will Rogers*

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